

Transporters, aviators return from the Carolinas

Virginia National Guard transportation Soldiers returned from supporting Hurricane Florence flood response operations in North Carolina Sept. 24, 2018, and a team of VNG aviators and Chesterfield County rescue technicians returned from South Carolina Sept. 26.

“Please accept my genuine expression of sincere pride and gratitude for your contributions that proved seminal to ensuring the safety of my fellow North Carolinians and our fellow Americans,” wrote Maj. Gen. Gregory A. Lusk, the Adjutant General of North Carolina in an email to Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia. “On behalf of Governor Roy Cooper, myself, and my fellow North Carolinians, thank you! The pride you should share and embrace is the knowledge that you, as a pivotal member of Guard-Nation, the non-federalized forces of our military, carried the load and performed magnificently.”

Lusk wrote that more 3,000 Guard personnel were on duty in support of Hurricane Florence response as well as nearly 200 active duty Soldiers from as far away as Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and Fort Drum, New York, joined in on the support effort.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/10/02/12046/>



Senior North Carolina National Guard senior leaders visit Virginia National Guard Soldiers assigned to the 1173rd Transportation Company Sept. 24, 2018, before they return to Virginia.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Virginia OCS dedicates building to Capt. Harry Q. Rose

An intimate gathering of Soldiers and family members marked the dedication of the Virginia National Guard's Officer Candidate School building in honor of Capt. Harry Q. Rose Sept. 22, 2018, at Fort Pickett, Virginia.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/10/03/12075/>

DMA hosts second supervisors course at SMR

The Virginia Department of Military Affairs conducted its second Supervisor Course Sept. 18-20, 2018, at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach. The three-day course focused on teaching supervisors how to manage state staff, with an emphasis on state human resources and safety requirements.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/10/03/12066/>

Airmen protect aircraft, citizens under hurricane threat

Virginia Air National Guard Airmen evacuated U.S. Air Force F-22 Raptors and T-38 Talons ahead of hurricane Florence from Joint Base Langley-Eustis and set up shelters in the local community, Sept. 11, 2018.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/09/24/12035/>

Gillis takes command of 329th Regional Support Group

Col. Doyle Gillis, Jr. took command of the Virginia Beach-based 329th Regional Support Group from Col. K. Weedon Gallagher in a change of command ceremony Sept. 9, 2018, at Fort Pickett, Virginia.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/09/22/12051/>

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For information about the joining the Virginia Army National Guard, the Virginia Air National Guard or Virginia Defense Force, visit the appropriate link below:

Va. Army National Guard

<http://nationalguard.com/va>

Va. Air National Guard

<https://www.192fw.ang.af.mil/join-virginia-air-national-guard/>

Va. Defense Force

<http://vdf.virginia.gov/joinvdf/>

Va. flight crews build trust, train with W. Va. special operators

A crowd of spectators started to form as two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters appeared over the tree line and landed along the shore of Lake Erie. It was almost lunchtime on Sept. 5, 2018, and already that morning a small group of Soldiers from the West Virginia National Guard's 19th Special Forces Group were busy preparing their equipment and getting ready for the day's training in Hamburg, New York, just south of Buffalo.

As the helicopter shut down and the blades stopped spinning, 1st Sgt. Kevin Vineyard, assigned to the Virginia National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, 29th Infantry Division, greeted Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mike, assigned to the 19th SFG. This wasn't their first time working together. Over the last half decade, the two have worked to develop training that meets the pre-deployment needs of the operators while also increasing proficiency for Vineyard's flight crews.

"It's almost like working with your doppelgänger," Vineyard said of Chief Mike. "It's so neat to find someone who thinks on the same level."

Both Vineyard and Chief Mike are driven by a similar desire to provide realistic, effective and relevant training to their Soldiers. Repeatedly working together over multiple years is part of what helps them reach that goal.

"The relationship with the Virginia National Guard has been unbelievable," Chief Mike said. "It's pretty much the same pilots and the same crew chiefs and it's been working like that for five years, which means we're always in synch with each other."

This year's training, like in years past, made use of standing relationships with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies in and around Buffalo, New York. Those relationships, according to Chief Mike, were a big part of the reason he decided to hold the training in that area and the training included support from the Town of Hamburg Police, Hamburg Water Rescue, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security.

"This is our third Buffalo evaluation and train-up for deployments," Chief Mike said. "We're pretty connected here."

The first few days of training were task-driven. The operators have a list of required skills they must certify on before they deploy and the Virginia flight crews, along with their helicopters, provided some of the necessary support to accomplish that certification.

On their first full training day, over Lake Erie, the focus was first on paradrops, which required the Special Forces Soldiers to jump from the helicopters and parachute into Lake Erie where they were then collected and brought to shore by local and federal partner agencies. After that, the training focus shifted to helocasting, an airborne insertion technique where a rotary-wing aircraft flies just above the water's surface at a low airspeed as the special operations forces jump into the water.

While training like this certifies the operators on their special skills, it also helps the flight crews improve their readiness levels.

"This is the next level of proficiency for our crews," Vineyard explained. "It's a chance to get the younger crew members



Virginia National Guard flight crews provide aviation support to Soldiers assigned to the West Virginia National Guard's 19th Special Forces Group Sept. 5, 2018, over Lake Erie near Buffalo, New York.

involved, take them to that next level and continue to challenge them so that they can become better crew members."

Sgt. Turner Welch, one of five crew chiefs to make the trek to New York, is one of those younger crew members. He's served six years so far, as a 15T UH-60 helicopter repairer.

"I've done some of this stuff before," Welch said. "But it's different because we're not just doing traffic patterns or bouncing around from airport to airport, you actually get to do what an assault unit is supposed to do on a deployment."

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/10/03/12061/>

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<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/09/18/11968/>

Tuition assistance deadline is November 1

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2018/10/03/12079/>

329th RSG on Facebook

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2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment on Facebook

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